

# **2001 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

## **Risk Behaviors of Montana Youth**

### **Who Participate in Healthy Lifestyles**

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Prepared for

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# **2001 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey Risk Behaviors of Montana Youth Who Participate in Healthy Lifestyles**

## **Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

The Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is administered by the Montana Office of Public Instruction every two years to 7th and 8th grade students and to high school students. The purpose of the survey is to help monitor the prevalence of behaviors that not only influence youth health, but also put youth at risk for the most significant health and social problems that can occur during adolescence. While all schools in Montana can participate in the survey on a volunteer basis, approximately 54 high schools are randomly selected to be included with high schools from other states for national data and reports.

The 2001 YRBS was conducted in March of 2001 with 7,655 7th and 8th grade students and 9,157 high school students. This represents approximately 31 percent of all 7th and 8th grade students and 18 percent of all high school students in Montana. Schools administering the survey to students were provided with detailed written instructions on conducting a random survey in their schools.

To encourage accurate responses to sensitive questions, a strict protocol was implemented to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all participating students.

Inadequate physical activity behaviors established during youth may extend into adulthood and increase risk for coronary heart disease, hypertension, non-insulin dependent diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, and mental health problems. In 2000, 23 percent of adult Montanans reported "no leisure time physical activity," 76 percent reported "no regular and sustained physical activity," and 82 percent reported "no regular and vigorous physical activity" (Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, 2000 BRFSS).

In addition, evidence suggests that approximately 33 percent of all cancer deaths in the United States are related to dietary factors (American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts and Figures, 2000).

Using this average, in Montana an estimated 1,353 of the total 4,100 cancer deaths for the year 2000 were related to dietary excesses and imbalances. In addition, 21 percent of Montana youth live in poverty and thus are at risk for hunger. Montana ranked 35th among the 50 states for the percent of children living in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

## **Survey Validity and Limitations**

Data used in this report from the 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey are not based on a random survey. It would not be valid to generalize the findings from this survey to all 7th and 8th grade and high school students in Montana. It is only valid to attribute the results of this survey to the students who reported their behaviors in response to the items in the questionnaire. In addition, respondents in self-reported surveys may have a tendency to underreport behaviors that are socially undesirable,

unhealthy, or illegal (alcohol consumption, drug use, seat belt non-usage, etc.) and overreport behaviors that are socially desirable (amount of exercise, etc.).

## Survey Results

For the purposes of this report, youth are classified as having healthy lifestyles if they reported exercising on at least three of the seven days prior to taking the survey and if they ate fruit at least four to six times during the seven days prior to taking the survey. The risk behaviors that were investigated are listed in Table 1 for high school youth in Montana.

Results of the investigation indicate the following:

- **Montana youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely to have used/abused alcohol than youth who reported living healthy lifestyles.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who lead non-healthy lifestyles are more likely (31.7 percent vs. 27.6 percent) to have had at least one drink of alcohol in the 30 days prior to taking the survey than students who lead healthy lifestyles. Similarly, Montana high school youth who lead non-healthy lifestyles are more likely (58.5 percent vs. 51.2 percent) to have had a drink of alcohol in the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who lead non-healthy lifestyles are slightly more likely (7.6 percent vs. 5.3 percent) than students who lead healthy lifestyles to have driven a car after drinking alcohol in the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Montana high school youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (25.4 percent vs. 20.3 percent) to have driven a car after drinking alcohol than students who lead healthy lifestyles.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (19.5 percent vs. 15.2 percent) than students who lead healthy lifestyles to have been involved in binge drinking (5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row) in the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Montana high school youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are also more likely (45.6 percent vs. 38.9 percent) to have been involved in binge drinking.

- **Montana youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely to have used marijuana than youth who live healthy lifestyles.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who do not live healthy lifestyles are over three times more likely (23 percent vs. 7 percent) than students who lead healthy lifestyles to have used marijuana in the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are over twice as likely (36 percent vs. 16 percent) to have used marijuana in the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

- **Montana youth who lead non-healthy lifestyles are more likely to have used tobacco products on one or more of the past 30 days, than youth who lead healthy lifestyles.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (17.9 percent vs. 12.1 percent) than students who lead healthy lifestyles to have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (36.2 percent vs. 24.6 percent) to have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (8.4 percent vs. 5.8 percent) than students who lead healthy lifestyles to have used chewing tobacco or snuff on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (17.4 percent vs. 15.2 percent) to have used chewing tobacco or snuff on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

- **Montana youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are slightly more likely to be sexually active than youth who live healthy lifestyles.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who do not live healthy lifestyles are slightly more likely (10.4 percent vs. 8.3 percent) than students who lead healthy lifestyles to have had sexual intercourse during the three months prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (31.6 percent vs. 26.5 percent) to have had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to taking the survey.

- **Montana youth who lead non-healthy lifestyles are more likely to have seriously considered suicide than youth who live healthy lifestyles.**

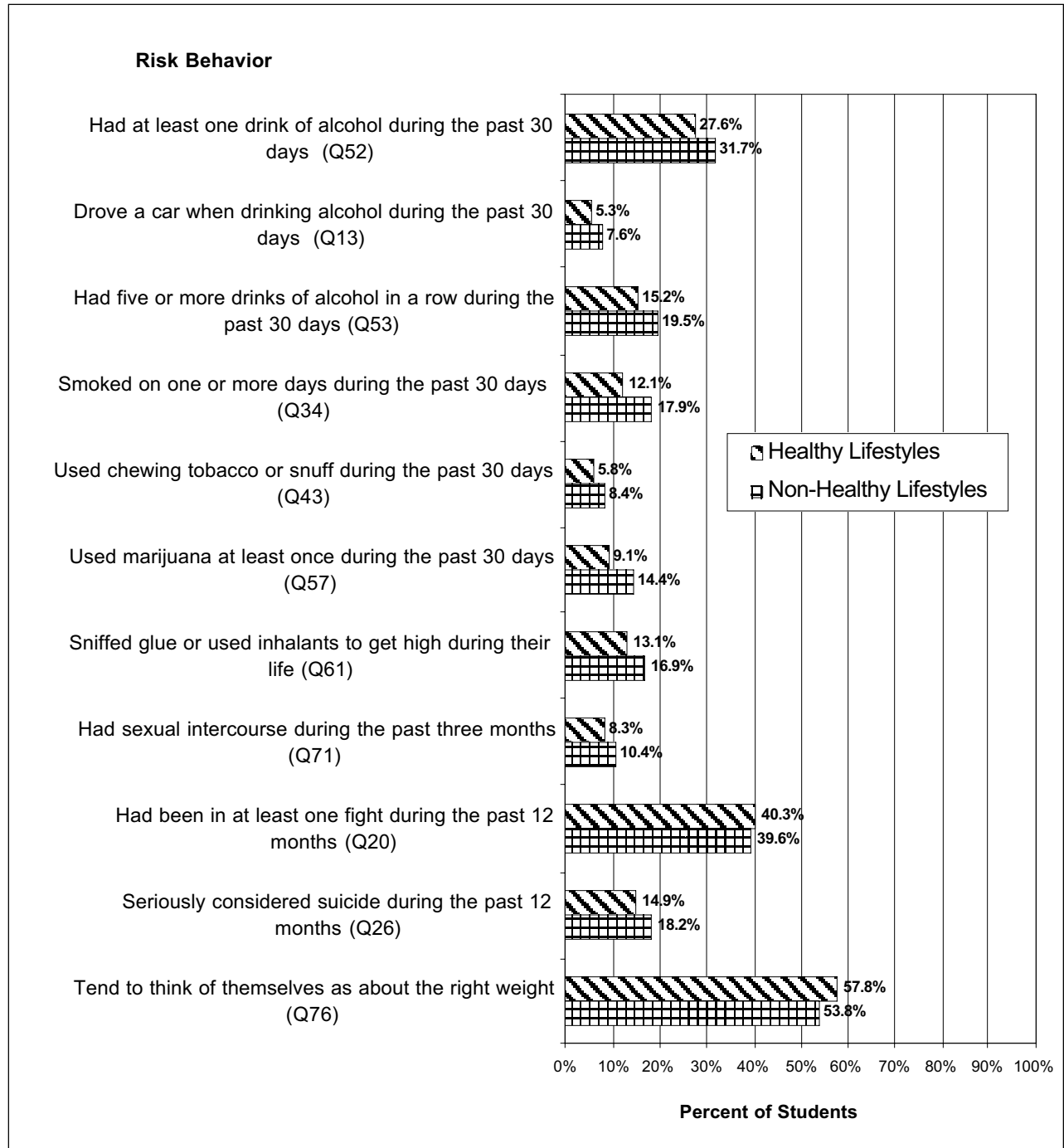
Montana 7th and 8th graders who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (18.2 percent vs. 14.9 percent) than students who lead healthy lifestyles to have seriously considered suicide during the 12 months prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who do not live healthy lifestyles are more likely (20.6 percent vs. 15.9 percent) to have seriously considered suicide in the 12 months prior to taking the survey.

Clearly, Montana youth who do not live healthy lifestyles also place themselves at higher risk for negative health consequences from other undesirable behaviors than youth who live healthy lifestyles. This association exists in nearly every behavior risk category, except having been involved in a fight in the past 12 months, in which there tends to be small differences between students who lead non-healthy lifestyles and students who lead healthy lifestyles (see Tables 1 and 2).

**Table 1**  
**2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Healthy Lifestyles vs. Non-Healthy Lifestyles**  
**Montana 7th and 8th Grade Students**

<b>Health Risk Behavior</b>	<b>Healthy Lifestyles</b>	<b>Non-Healthy Lifestyles</b>	<b>Statewide Average</b>
Had at least one drink of alcohol during the past 30 days (Q52)	27.6%	31.7%	30.2%
Drove a car when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (Q13)	5.3%	7.6%	6.8%
Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row during the past 30 days (Q53)	15.2%	19.5%	17.9%
Smoked on one or more days during the past 30 days (Q34)	12.1%	17.9%	15.8%
Used chewing tobacco or snuff during the past 30 days (Q43)	5.8%	8.4%	7.4%
Used marijuana at least once during the past 30 days (Q57)	9.1%	14.4%	12.5%
Sniffed glue or used inhalants to get high during their life (Q61)	13.1%	16.9%	15.4%
Had sexual intercourse during the past three months (Q71)	8.3%	10.4%	9.7%
Had been in at least one fight during the past 12 months (Q20)	40.3%	39.6%	40.3%
Seriously considered suicide during the past 12 months (Q26)	14.9%	18.2%	16.8%
Tend to think of themselves as about the right weight (Q76)	57.8%	53.8%	55.5%

**Figure 1**  
**2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Healthy Lifestyles vs. Non-Healthy Lifestyles**  
**Montana 7th and 8th Grade Students**



**Table 2**  
**2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Healthy Lifestyles vs. Non-Healthy Lifestyles**  
**Montana High School Students**

<b>Health Risk Behavior</b>	<b>Healthy Lifestyles</b>	<b>Non-Healthy Lifestyles</b>	<b>Statewide Average</b>
Had at least one drink of alcohol during the past 30 days (Q52)	51.2%	58.5%	54.1%
Drove a car when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (Q13)	20.3%	25.4%	21.8%
Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row during the past 30 days (Q53)	38.9%	45.6%	41.4%
Smoked on one or more days during the past 30 days (Q34)	24.6%	36.2%	28.5%
Used chewing tobacco or snuff during the past 30 days (Q43)	15.2%	17.4%	15.7%
Used marijuana at least once during the past 30 days (Q57)	21.8%	26.0%	27.1%
Sniffed glue or used inhalants to get high during their life (Q61)	12.6%	16.8%	15.0%
Had sexual intercourse during the past three months (Q71)	26.5%	31.6%	30.7%
Had been in at least one fight during the past 12 months (Q20)	32.4%	31.0%	31.6%
Seriously considered suicide during the past 12 months (Q26)	15.9%	20.6%	19.4%
Tend to think of themselves as about the right weight (Q76)	57.2%	52.4%	54.3%

**Figure 2**  
**2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Healthy Lifestyles vs. Non-Healthy Lifestyles**  
**Montana High School Students**

